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Nominal morphology and semantics - Where's gender (and 'partitive articles') in Gallo-Romance?

Stark, Elisabeth

Abstract: The phenomenon of clitic doubling is known to be especially interesting with respect to the Romance languages. As its name suggest, clitic doubling involves the doubling of a verbal argument by a clitic pronoun inside the same propositional structure. From a generative perspective it was initially investigated focusing on its properties as exhibited in those Romance languages where it is attested. Thus Jaeggli (1982) who was the first to notice its theoretical importance, describes it for River Plate Spanish (spoken in Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay). Over the years, different factors that make clitic doubling possible, likely or even obligatory have been studied. Grammatical factors such as e.g. pronominal vs. non-pronominal, accusative vs. dative, the occurrence vs. non-occurrence of different object marking together with semantic and pragmatic factors such as e.g. animacy, specificity or definiteness have been held responsible for the occurrence and distribution. This volume is a collection of papers given at the workshop "Clitic Doubling and the syntax/semantic interface in Romance DPs" held at the University of Hamburg in November 2014. The workshop was a joint event organized by NEREUS (Research Network for Referential Categories in Spanish and other Romance languages" and the DFG-project "Clitic Doubling across Romance". The papers of this volume deal with different aspects of the clitic doubling construction and related issues, such as its semantic, pragmatic and morphosyntactic properties across the Romance languages and beyond, thereby contributing to the understanding of the nature of the cross-linguistic variation, as well as the micro-variation observed within.

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“Clitic Doubling and other issues of the
syntax/semantic interface in Romance DPs”

Susann Fischer & Mario Navarro (eds.)



Fachbereich Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Konstanz

Arbeitspapier Nr. 128

**Proceedings of the VII NEREUS INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP:
CLITIC DOUBLING AND OTHER ISSUES OF THE SYNTAX/SEMANTIC INTERFACE
IN ROMANCE DPS**

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Preface

The phenomenon of clitic doubling is known to be especially interesting with respect to the Romance languages. As its name suggest, clitic doubling involves the doubling of a verbal argument by a clitic pronoun inside the same propositional structure. From a generative perspective it was initially investigated focusing on its properties as exhibited in those Romance languages where it is attested. Thus Jaeggli (1982) who was the first to notice its theoretical importance, describes it for River Plate Spanish (spoken in Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay). Over the years, different factors that make clitic doubling possible, likely or even obligatory have been studied. Grammatical factors such as e.g. pronominal vs. non-pronominal, accusative vs. dative, the occurrence vs. non-occurrence of different object marking together with semantic and pragmatic factors such as e.g. animacy, specificity or definiteness have been held responsible for the occurrence and distribution.

This volume is a collection of papers given at the workshop “Clitic Doubling and other issues of the syntax/semantic interface in Romance DPs” held at the University of Hamburg in November 2014.

<https://www.slm.uni-hamburg.de/romanistik/personen/fischer/downloads/clitic-doubling.pdf>

The workshop was a joint event organized by NEREUS (Research Network for Referential Categories in Spanish and other Romance languages” and the DFG-project “Clitic Doubling across Romance”. The papers of this volume deal with different aspects of the clitic doubling construction and related issues, such as its semantic, pragmatic and morphosyntactic properties across the Romance languages and beyond, thereby contributing to the understanding of the nature of the cross-linguistic variation, as well as the micro-variation observed within.

We would like to thank all contributors and participants of the workshop for their interest and committed engagement. The quality of the papers and the passionate discussions made the workshop a very inspiring event. We would like to acknowledge DFG grant (FI 875/3-1) and the University of Hamburg for financial support of this workshop. Special thanks go to Sarah Jobus for preparing the manuscript and to Georg Kaiser for his generous help with all editorial and technical matters.

Hamburg, September 2016

Susann Fischer
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Nominal morphology and semantics – Where's gender (and 'partitive articles') in Gallo-Romance?

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1. Introduction*

Comparing three standard Romance languages, namely French, Italian, and Spanish, as to their inventories of indefinite nominal determiners, we observe some crucial differences (see Stark 2008 a and b for the following examples and description):

- (1) a. *Has visto *(un) águila?* (Sp.)
 b. *As -tu vu *(un) aigle?* (Fr.)
 c. *Hai visto *(un') aquila?* (It.)
 have.2SG -2SG see.PTCP a.M eagle
 'Have you seen an eagle?'
- (2) a. *Compro pan.* (Sp.)
 b. *J' achète *(du) pain.* (Fr.)
 c. *Compro (del) pane.* (It.)
 1SG buy.1SG PART bread
 'I buy bread.'
- (3) a. *Me falta agua.* (Sp.)
 b. *Il me faut *(de l') eau.* (Fr.)
 c. *Mi occorre (dell') acqua.* (It.)
 (3SG) 1SG.DAT need.3SG PART water
 'I need water.'
- (4) a. *Veo (a unos) estudiantes en el edificio.* (Sp.)
 DOM¹ some
 b. *Je vois *(des) étudiants dans le bâtiment.* (Fr.)
 c. *Vedo (degli) studenti nell' edificio.* (It.)
 1SG see.1SG PART student.PL in the.M building
 'I see students in the building.'

First, we can see in examples (2) to (4) that the availability of bare nominals in postverbal argument position (direct objects in (2) and (4), internal arguments of impersonal constructions in (3)) is severely restricted in French as opposed to Italian and Spanish (impossible even with mass readings, see examples (2) and (3) and with plurals, examples in (4)). Second, in Standard French and Standard Italian exists a so-called 'partitive article', etymologically based on the Latin preposition *de* and the definite article deriving from *ILLE* (cf. Carlier/Lamiroy 2014), for mass interpretation (examples (2) and (3)), absent in Spanish

* I would like to thank the organizers of the VII NEREUS International Workshop "Clitic Doubling and other issues of the syntax/semantic interface in Romance DPs" in October 2014 at Hamburg university, Susann Fischer and Mario Navarro, and the audience of my talk there for very helpful comments, especially Artemis Alexiadou, Elena Anagnostopoulou, Klaus von Heusinger and Natascha Pomino. All remaining errors are, of course, mine.

¹ DOM (= Differential Object Marking) indicates the marker *a* for a certain subgroup of direct objects in Spanish (prototypically animate, definite, specific ones, cf. von Heusinger/Kaiser 2005).

(and Rumanian, Portuguese etc.). This indefinite mass determiner has also a plural form in Standard French and Standard Italian (see examples under (4), which will however not be taken into account in what follows, for at least two reasons:² First, it has a different distribution in some Romance varieties from the singular form (e.g. it is not present in many Northern Italian dialects cf. Garzonio/Poletto 2014, or it is only present, without the singular equivalent, e.g. in Anconetano, cf. Cardinaletti/Giusti 2014). Second, it has a completely different semantics from the singular (most probably denoting subkinds, cf. Zamparelli 2008, following Chierchia 1998, also wide-scope readings, cf. Cardinaletti/Giusti 2014 and Ihsane 2008, 2013).

The singular ‘partitive articles’ have been claimed to represent some sort of nominal classifiers in a broad sense (Herslund 1998, Stark 2008a and b), which would be typologically highly marked in Indo-European languages (cf. Chierchia 1998) and has thus to be explained. Third, overt marking of morphological categories on the noun is extremely reduced in Standard French as opposed to other Romance Standard languages and many Romance non-standard varieties: number marking on N is absent nowadays in (phonic) French (the graphic marking by the letter *-s* has almost no phonetic correlate, cf. Pomino 2012, Massot 2014 on that issue) and there are no declension classes or overt word markers in French.

- (5) *un ami/une amie* – *des ami(e)s*
 [œnami/ynami – dezami]
 ‘a friend’ (m/fem) ‘friends’

(cf. Delfitto/Schroten 1991, 177ff.)

Modern Standard Italian has three main declension classes (going back to the Latin *o-*, *a-*, and consonantial declension respectively) and overt gender and number marking on N, but this marking, as we can see under (6), is not unambiguous:

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (6) <i>libr-o</i> _{M.SG} | <i>libr-i</i> _{M.SG} | <i>man-o</i> _{F.SG} | <i>man-i</i> _{F.PL} | <i>bracci-o</i> _{M.SG} | <i>bracci-a</i> _{F.PL} |
| ‘book’ | ‘books’ | ‘hand’ | ‘hands’ | ‘arm’ | ‘arms’ |
| <i>cas-a</i> _{F.SG} | <i>cas-e</i> _{F.PL} | <i>(poet-a)</i> _{M.SG} | <i>poet-i</i> _{M.PL} | | |
| ‘house’ | ‘houses’ | ‘poet’ | ‘poets’ | | |
| <i>can-e</i> _{M.SG} | <i>can-i</i> _{M.PL} | <i>nott-e</i> _{F.SG} | <i>nott-i</i> _{F.PL} | | |
| ‘dog’ | ‘dogs’ | ‘night’ | ‘nights’ | | |

An ending in *-o* is unambiguously singular, but as for its gender, it can be masculine (most frequent case) or feminine. *-i* is unambiguously plural, but, again, not clear concerning its gender value. *-a* can both be singular and plural (feminine, or masculine singular, mainly in Greek loans like *poeta*), and *-e* can be singular (masculine or feminine) or feminine plural. In contrast to this quite syncretic nominal declension paradigm of Modern Standard Italian, Spanish nouns are unambiguously marked for plural in all three main declension classes, using final *-s*, almost without allomorphs (but see *-es* for nouns ending in consonant: *mujer*, ‘woman’ – *mujer-es*, ‘women; for gender marking see Harris 1992), as shown under (7):

² Of course, etymologically, indefinite *du* and *des* are unification products of prep. *de* plus def. article *le/la/les*; they also have parallel behavior as to *en*-pronominalization (Ihsane 2013: 10), contrary to quantifiers/numerals like *beaucoup*, ‘many’ or *un*, ‘one’. Still, their semantics is different, as is their geographical distribution in Romance non-standard varieties.

(7) <i>pas-o</i> _{M.SG}	<i>pas-os</i> _{M.PL}	<i>man-o</i> _{F.SG}	<i>man-os</i> _{F.PL} ;
‘step’	‘steps’	‘hand’	‘hands’
<i>pas-a</i> _{F.SG}	<i>pas-as</i> _{F.PL}	<i>map-a</i> _{M.SG}	<i>map-as</i> _{M.SG} ;
‘raisin’	‘raisins’	‘map’	‘maps’
<i>jef-e</i> _{M.SG}	<i>jef-es</i> _{M.PL}	<i>nub-e</i> _{F.SG}	<i>nub-es</i> _{F.PL} .
‘boss’	‘bosses’	‘cloud’	‘clouds’

In this contribution, we will take up the idea of an explanatory correlation between overt and unambiguous number and gender marking on nominals in different Romance languages and varieties and the inventory of indefinite determiners we find in these varieties, focusing on the (in)existence of the so-called ‘partitive article’ (singular). In section 2 we will outline the basic idea, identifying the explicit marking of “non-individuation” as the function of the ‘partitive article’. In section 3, we will sketch the syntactic analysis of Romance indefinite nominals with and without ‘partitive articles’ and formulate a strong prediction: ‘partitive articles’ are not to be expected in Romance varieties with agglutinative unambiguous plural marking, like in modern Standard Spanish. This prediction will be tested against typological and dialectological evidence for some (Gallo-)Romance varieties in a contiguous area in section 4, also briefly discussing questions of language contact. Section 5 will present a short conclusion and formulate open research questions and delineate the broad lines of a potential research program.

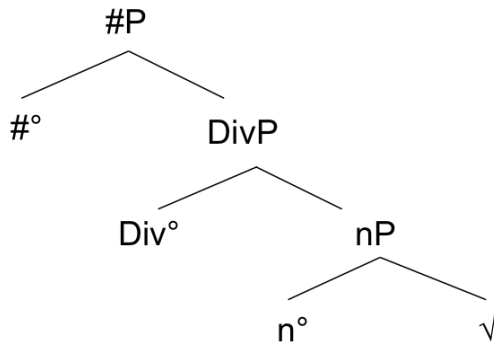
2. Idea: Different strategies of ‘non-individuation marking’ inside Romance

In what follows, we will understand *individuation* (see Stark 2009 for a very general overview) roughly as *quantization*, ‘portioning out’ of individuals or atoms (Krifka 1989; see Ghomeshi/Massam 2012 and literature therein, cf. also Cowper/Hall 2012: 29) and assume an “individuation function” (cf. Krifka 1995) present in plural NPs (*cow-s*) or singular NPs with the indefinite article (*a cow*). Their semantic representations

[...] have an *internal structure* that identifies individual elements: they involve a set ‘u’ consisting of elements ‘x’ that satisfy a certain predicate (e.g. COW). [...] [the, ES] *individuation function* [...] provides access to individual elements of the set ‘u’. (Wiese 2012:72)

Now, languages differ in what linguistic means they use to indicate this individuation function, the typical means being classifiers in languages without inflectional number marking (cf. Cowper/Hall 2012: 27). Romance languages are usually considered as plural marking languages without classifiers (cf. Chierchia 1998), and, in fact, overt plural marking is sufficient for signalling individuation, the absence of the plural feature resulting in singular or mass (= non-individuated) interpretation and the singular indefinite article signalling explicitly individuation (cf. Meisterfeld 2000 for a similar diachronic assumption for Romance, see also Stark 2009). (Romance) plural morphemes can thus be considered as *classifying plurals* in the sense of Borer’s “DivP” (2005), denoting sets of sets of atomic entities, or Mathieu (2014; see also Phan 2016, Pomino this volume), besides their counting function (“#P”):

(8)



If non-individuation is one feature of nominals with a ‘mass interpretation’ (cf. Cowper/Hall 2012 for an in depth discussion) and if individuation is signalled via plural morphology or/and determiners and quantifiers, we can assume together with Pelletier (2012: 24; see already Allan 1980, Borer 2005), that “[...] the +MASS / +COUNT distinction happens at a level of syntactic complexity that is larger than lexical nouns [...]”, or at least higher than the lexical root. Evidence for this assumption comes from very basic Romance nominals, where one and the same lexical item can be used with a mass = non-individuated (examples under a)) and count = individuated interpretation (examples under b)), the difference depending on the syntactic context:

- (9) a. *J’ achète du poisson.* (Fr.)
 1SG buy.1SG PART fish
 ‘I buy fish.’
 b. *J’ achète un poisson.* (Fr.)³
 1SG buy.1SG a.M/one.M fish
 ‘I buy a/one fish.’
- (10) a. *Compro pan.* (Sp.)
 buy.1SG bread
 ‘I buy bread.’
 b. *Compro un pan (muy rico).* (Sp.)
 buy.1SG a.M bread very tasty.M
 ‘I buy a (very tasty) bread.’

The question remains why the simple absence of the explicit ‘individualizer’, the indefinite article stemming from the Latin numeral UNUS (‘one’), is not enough in French to yield the opposite reading, i.e. non-individuation, like it is the case in Spanish and many other languages and varieties. The main differences between French and most other Romance varieties concerning especially number marking (cf. Schroten 2001:196), we will try to show in the next section that nominal morphology is at stake here and that the ‘partitive article’ (singular at least) assumes a function expressed indirectly in other Romance languages. We

³ We are perfectly aware of the fact that due to lexical content there are more or less natural affinities between a root and a mass or a count reading of the nominal, but mass readings even of roots denoting humans like *child* can be coerced and the sentences are grammatical:

(i) *Après l’accident, il y avait beaucoup d’enfant par terre.*
 (‘After the accident, there was much child lying on the ground’).
 Cf. the notion of „universal grinder“, first used in Pelletier 1975.

will additionally try to find an explanation for the apparent optionality of the Italian ‘partitive article’ (cf. Korzen 1996).

3. Number and gender inside Romance nominals – proposal of an analysis

3.1 General considerations

We start from some general assumptions, the first being formulated in the framework of Distributed Morphology (DM, cf. Halle/Marantz 1993). First, lexical roots are not specified for grammatical categories. They are not specified for mass or count readings, either. Rather, they combine in syntax with functional heads (n° , v° , a°) in order to form nominal, verbal, adjectival constituents. Second, these heads may contain ‘lexical’ properties like gender or animacy (cf. Kramer 2009, Ihsane/Sleeman 2014, Atkinson in press for the encoding of sex/semantic gender in nominals); in our context, the functional head n° taking a lexical root as its complement and forming something nominal is the ‘locus of gender negotiation’ (see below). Nominal expressions of the type nP combine then with a functional projection similar to Borer’s (2005) DivP in (8), which we would like to rename *IndP* = *Individuation phrase*, and which we claim to be *always* present in Romance nominals, unlike DivP, which is present only in nominals with a count reading. IndP is also the locus of the number feature NUM. Mass or count readings result from the interaction of IndP with nP, of nP with the lexical root, and of IndP with higher functional projections, e.g. #P for inserting numerals or quantifiers, which provoke a count (numerals, Eng. *many*), mass (Engl. *much*) or unmarked reading (Fr. *beaucoup*). IndP is thus the locus where (non-)individuation has to be marked, something essential for the referential use of nominals (see Farkas/de Swart 2003, de Swart/Zwarts 2009 on that point). If the NUM feature in Ind $^\circ$ is valued as plural and expressed through a lexical item being associated with that value (e.g. Spanish *-s*), individuation will be at stake. Morphologically unmarked forms, however, are ambiguous: they can have the value of singular as a NUM feature (i.e. lack the plural value of the NUM feature, cf. Cowper/Hall 2012: 29), or they can be unmarked for NUM, i.e. they can denote non-individuated (mass) referents. Count readings in such a case result from material higher in the structure (e.g. overt numerals in #P). This idea is compatible with the general observation that count nominals are more complex than mass nominals (cf. Borer 2005, Ihsane 2008, 2013, Krifka 2013): following our proposal, they have a morphological exponent of the plural number feature in IndP or an explicit counting element in #P or even higher in the structure.

Furthermore, gender in French is not marked by a proper morpheme (there may however exist complex phonological templates, cf. Lowenstamm 2007, 2012), whereas it is specified most often (see Alexiadou 2004) on the root in Italian and Spanish for the correct association with the corresponding word markers (see acquisitional evidence in Eichler 2012). These word markers (cf. section 1) can be considered direct morphological exponents of n° .

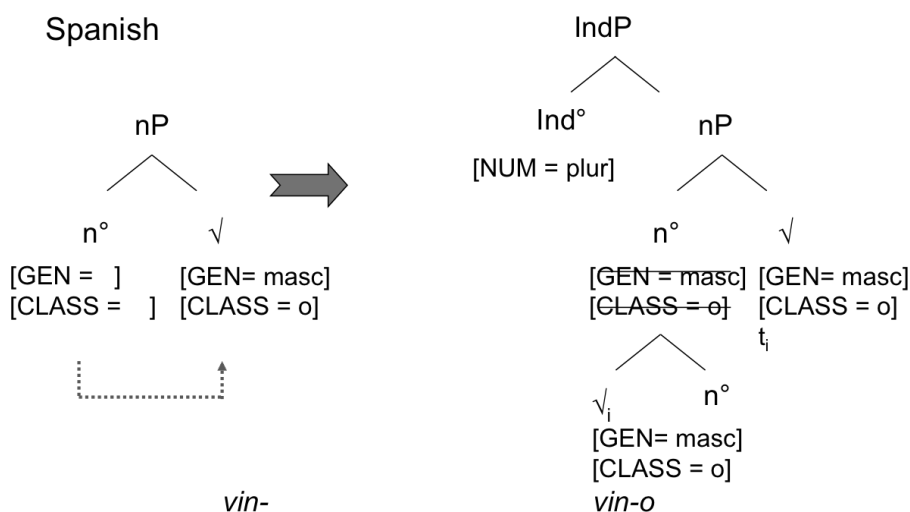
The expression of number generally depends on the expression of gender in nominals (cf. Ritter 1993, Picallo 2005). This can be seen, for example, in patterns of defective plural agreement inside feminine, but not masculine DPs in some Ladin varieties (cf. Pomino 2012) or in the lack of plural marking for Spanish ‘neuter’ pronouns (underspecified roots for gender, cf. Pomino/Stark 2009b) as opposed to masculine or feminine pronouns.

In order to understand the interaction between nominal morphology and the interpretation of nominals as (non-)individuated, we will try now to model the derivations of Romance indefinite nominals applying the probe-goal model of agreement (operation AGREE) developed in Chomsky 2001 and refined in Pesetzky/Torrego 2004, where the assumed optionality of movement of the goal will play a major role.

3.2 Spanish

Let us start with Spanish:

(11)

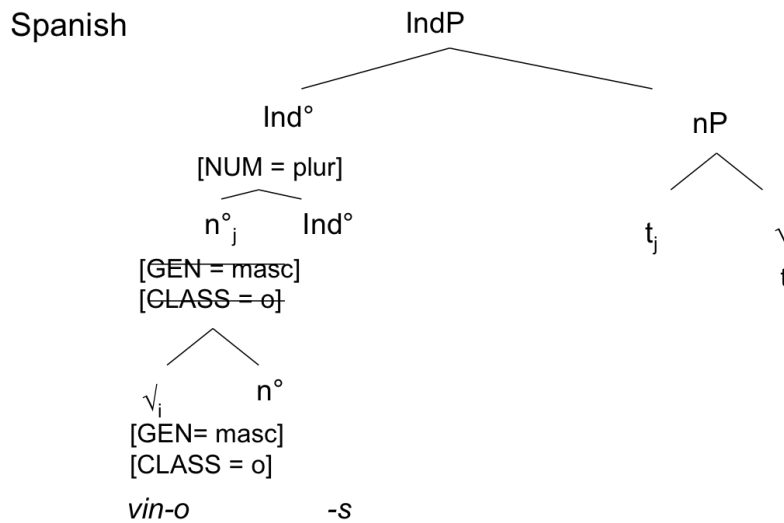


In (11), we can see that gender is assumed to be a property of the root *vin-*, the complement of a functional head n° with a probe for gender and word class, as declension class is independent from gender (cf. Harris 1992 for Spanish, Alexiadou 2004). Successful probing and valuation of features in the probe result in a (potentially) mobile goal and subsequently in incorporating the lexical root in n° . n° hosts an

[...] interpretable feature [...] This feature is the linguistic expression of non-linguistic processes of entity categorization, that is, the attribution of a class or a type to the stuff denoted by the lexical entry of common nouns. (Picallo 2005: 108)

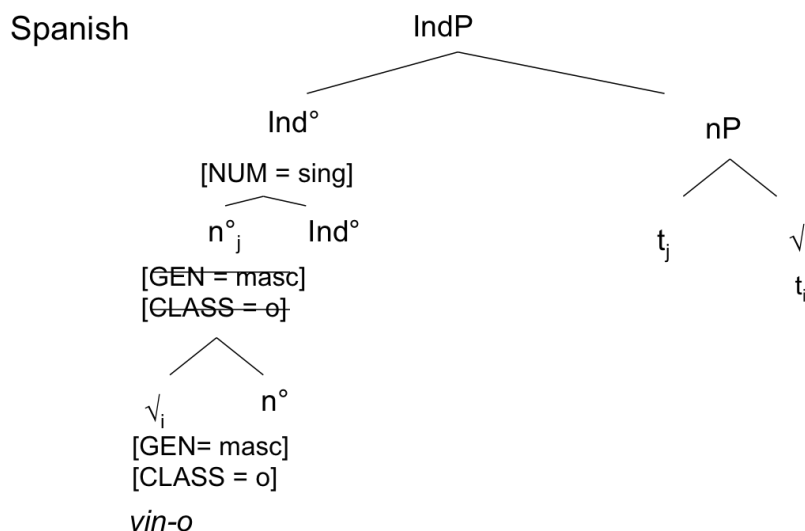
However, we consider this interpretable feature as independent – contra Picallo – from the formal exponent available in a nominal. If only gender and word class is specified (= if we have a syntactic element of the category nP), we get a kind or type reading, not a referential reading, because *vin-o* under n° is not in itself specified for number, being at the same time formally a proper constituent of the plural expression *vino-s* (for a similar argumentation see Picallo 2005:107f., 111; for a similar argumentation in favour of the kind reading of parallel nominals in Brazilian Portuguese cf. Pires de Oliveira / Rothstein 2013, for argumentation in favour of a property-denoting approach see Espinal 2013). This is the reason why we can have bare count nominals in the singular as incorporated objects in Spanish like in *tengo perro* ('I have dog' = I am a dog owner).

(12)



In (12), the result of the merge of Ind°, with a valued number feature (plural), with nP, we see that *vin-o-s* is incorporated into IndP. The expression represents a valid syntactic object, as it is now specified for number and can be taken as a complement of #°, D° or further functional heads in the nominal domain (see Ihsane 2008, 2013 for a similar proposal for French). This number value specification is not the result of a probing operation, but can be read off the transparent combination of the morphological exponent of the plural value of the number feature with *vin-o*. As we have assumed in section 3.1, the combination of an nP with a number feature plural in Ind° leads to the interpretation of the nominal's referent as individuated, whereas the absence of this value results, as a default, in a mass interpretation (see Krifka 2013):

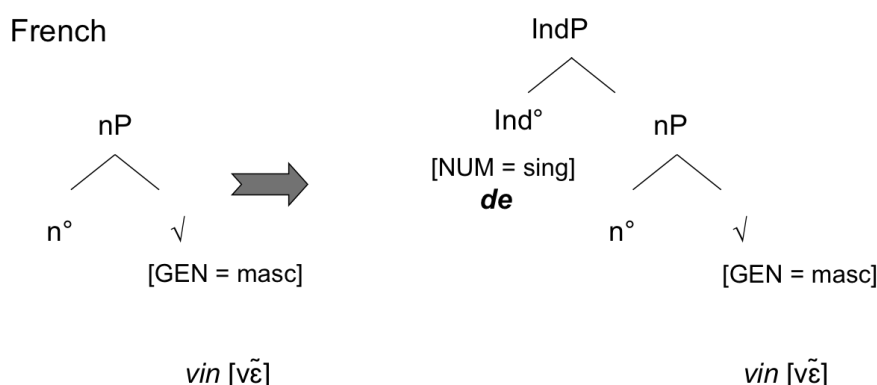
(13)



However, this mass interpretation is not available when *vin-o* is the complement of an indefinite article, an explicit 'individualizer' (see section 3.1): *un vin-o* ('one (sort of) wine'). To sum up, as *vin-o* is a proper constituent of *vin-o-s*, the latter signalling unambiguously individuation, it can be only morphologically singular, and the syntactic context decides whether its referent receives an individuated (indefinite article) or mass interpretation (bare

3.3 French

(14)

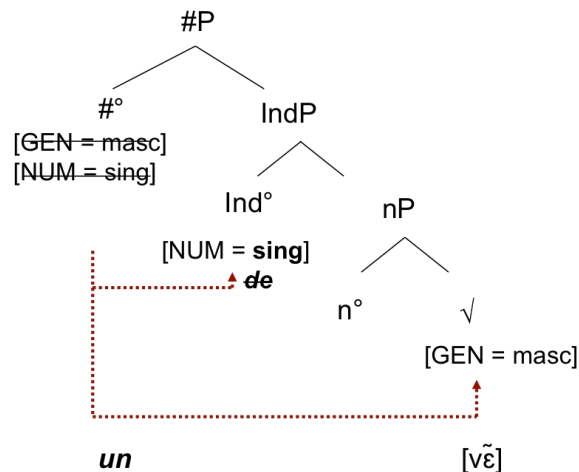


As there is no probing, there is no movement, i.e. as a result of merging the root with n° , we get a highly defective nominal, not even being recognizable as one. Merge with additional functional heads having overt morphological exponents is necessary, but Ind° with e.g. a valued plural feature in French is not enough, as there is no exponence whatsoever of the singular or plural value of the number feature on the noun itself. This is the reason why not even bare plurals are found in French, unless under the scope of negation in more or less lexicalized contexts (cf. *Elle passe sa vie sans véritables amies*, ‘She spends her life without any true friends’ or *J’ai fait cela sans grandes arrière-pensées*, ‘I did that without any hidden agenda’). Nominals are minimally introduced by *de*, even under the scope of negation: *Je ne bois pas de vin* (‘I do not drink wine’). This *de* is also found after quantifiers in $\#P$ (*Je bois beaucoup de vin*, ‘I drink much wine’), and, in some substandard varieties of French, even with numerals (*J’ai deux de bonnets*, ‘I have two caps’, cf. Ihsane 2013: 4f.).⁴ We claim that this *de* is always inserted in Ind° , yielding a default classification as ‘non-individuated’, parallel to Spanish *vino* in (13) above. Merge of numerals like *un*, *deux*, *trois* (‘one, two three’) in $\#P$ results in a count reading, as does the incorporation of *de* into a higher head (maybe Ihsane’s 2008 NumP above $\#P$) containing the plural form *les* and resulting in the subkind signalling *des* (see Introduction, Zamparelli 2008). This is shown in (15):

⁴ The general presence of *de* in indefinite nominals has already been proposed by Kayne 1977 and Milner 1978 for French, with *de* however being analysed as a preposition, as assumption that cannot be correct due to the absence of extraction problems, case assignment in causative constructions etc., see the discussion in Ihsane 2013 and Carlier 2007 for a diachronic analysis of French).

(15)

French



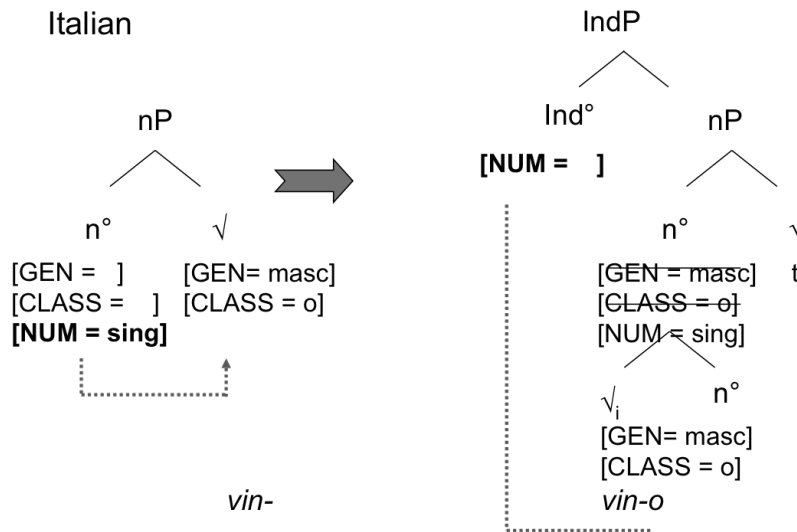
(15) illustrates merge of #P (a slot for numerals or quantifiers like *beaucoup*, see Ihsane 2008 for a proposal of the internal structure of *du/des* nominals in French) with the IndP having a number feature value (singular), like in Spanish and the minimal morphological exponent *de*. #° bears a probe for number and gender, as there is agreement for these features, e.g. in *nombreux* ('many'). In (15), we see the agreement results for the indefinite article with an AGREE operation between #° and Ind° for number and a second subsequent one between #° and the root for gender. Different from previous proposals (cf. Heycock/Zamparelli 2005, Stark 2008b) and in accordance with early distributional reflections (e.g. in Vater 1963 for German and Ihsane 2008, 2013, for French), we locate *un* in this head. If these elements and accordingly a gender probe were located together with the valued number feature on Ind°, a complete AGREE operation between Ind° and the root could take place, the result being a parallel structure to Spanish (see (11) and (13) above – which would not account for the unavailability of bare nominals in French (see section 1, examples (2), (3) and (4)).

Note that it is the different or absent gender exponent (and probe) on n° and the missing word classes that make the difference between Spanish and French, not the locus of the valued number feature (cf. similar ideas in Stark 2008 a and b). Differently from Spanish, however *only* the choice of the element in #° or an explicit plural exponent even higher in the structure (*d-es*) marks (non-)individuation in French, bare nominals like [vẽ], morphologically not marked for number, are no proper constituents of a plural form, and leave the interpretation as to their (non-)individuation or a potential kind-/type-denotation completely open.

3.4 Italian

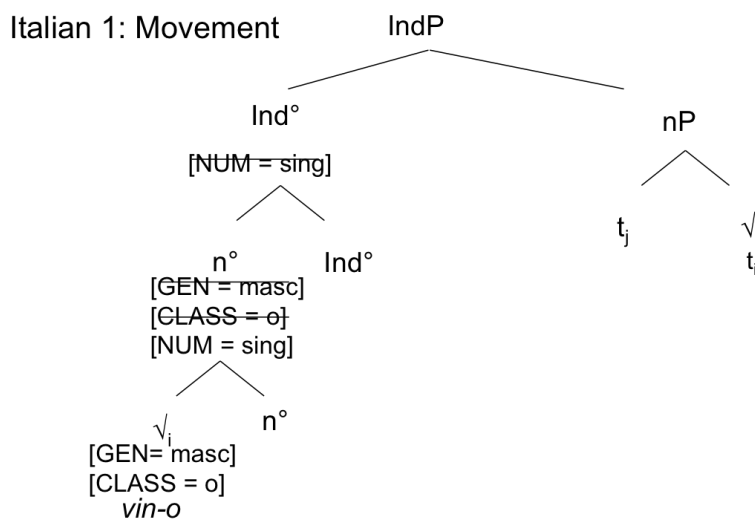
Due to the fusional character of nominal morphology in Italian (cf Alexiadou 2004: 27, who considers Italian theme vowels as *portemanteau* morphemes), we assume that Italian roots come with a specified gender and word class feature out of the lexicon and merge with n° specified for number:

(16)



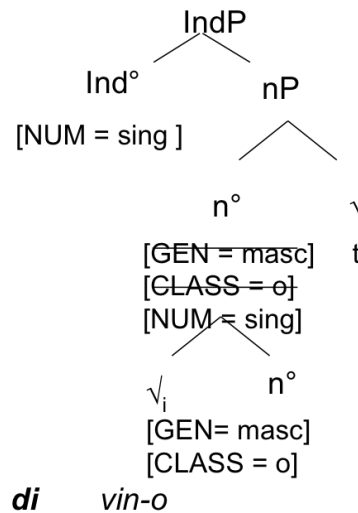
The derivation mirrors the Spanish one (cf. (11) above) with one important difference: an expression like *vino* in Italian cannot be a proper constituent of a plural IndP, it is already specified for number on the level of nP (cf. Eichler 2012: 358f.). That means that we cannot have a kind/type reading of bare count nominals like in Spanish, a prediction which is borne out (**tiene cane* in the sense of ‘he is a dog owner’ is ungrammatical in Italian). For the correct interpretation of the nominal, this structure presents a problem, however: the valued NUM feature on nP cannot trigger number agreement nor indicate individuation (Cowper/Hall 2012: 29), because, as we put it in section 3.1, the interpretation ‘more than 1 individual’ (individuation) depends on a plural value of the NUM feature in *Ind°* in our model. We therefore assume a probe for the NUM feature on *Ind°* for Italian, which after AGREE either triggers movement of nP, and the whole expression is incorporated into IndP (see (17), parallel to Spanish in (13)), or, like in French, there is no movement, and the nominal needs an overt element to express number and encode individuation in the higher structure (see (18)):

(17)



(18)

Italian 2: no movement:

di

The structure in (17) is a nominal that receives a mass interpretation like in Spanish, unless material higher in the structure encodes individuation (= *uno* in #°). The structure in (18), without movement of nP to Ind°, is, like in French, a defective nominal without any morphological expression of the NUM feature on Ind°, where it is needed for interpretation (cf. (14) for French)). And like in French, the choice of quantifiers or some higher elements in the structure *obligatorily* expresses individuation in those cases where n° does not move to Ind°. The analysis presented here claiming optional movement after AGREE (cf. Chomsky 2001) for nP accounts for the Standard Italian facts, where optionality of the ‘partitive article’ observed in production data results from two different underlying structures ((17) vs. (18)) and is – after all – no real optionality.

3.5 Generalizations and predictions

To sum up, we have seen in this section that the absence of word class markers in French can be accounted for by the absence of a probe for word class plus gender below #°, which blocks the lexical root in its original position and does not allow for any movement. The result is a defective expression, lacking even “entity categorization” (cf. Picallo 2005 for Spanish) and being unable to appear as such in a sentence. The value of the number feature is specified on Ind°, either as such or as the result of a probing relation between a probe in Ind° and nP (Italian). A valued NUM feature in Ind° is the condition for a nominal to be allowed in argument position (Romance languages being number marking languages). The assumption of a probing relation between Ind° and the valued NUM feature on n° in Italian (one way to account for the syncretic nominal morphology in Italian, cf. Alexiadou 2004) accounts for the optionality of movement and incorporation of n° in Ind° and accordingly the optionality of merge of a ‘mass marker’ *di* or indefinite article in #° in this language. The absence of markers for word class, gender and number on French nominals calls for obligatory overt elements bearing at least an information on ‘(non-)individuation’, i.e. for nominals with mass or count (individualized) readings, as nominals without overt determiners or quantifiers are simply not available as syntactic objects at the level of predication (arguments) in French.

This leads to the following predictions:

1. Overt number marking on nominals (= exponents for the plural value of the NUM feature in IndP and individuation) reduces the probability of an obligatory ‘partitive article’ in the respective Romance variety (weak correlation, unidirectional).

2. Absence of overt word class markers increases instead the probability of a (obligatory?) ‚partitive article’ (weak correlation, unidirectional).
3. ‚Agglutinative’ nominal morphology (= word class and plural markers as separate morphological exponents, not ‚fusional’: Spanish vs. Italian) is incompatible with obligatory ‚partitive articles’ in Romance (strong correlation, bidirectional).

In the interest of space, it is impossible to give a detailed Pan-Romance overview over every Romance variety with respect to the three generalizations above. But as a start, we will present a short overview in the next section focusing on established dialectological knowledge of Gallo-Romance, where an intense and long-lasting horizontal language contact is in place as well as an intense vertical contact situation with standard French being the *Dachsprache* (cf. Kloss 1978) of Occitan and many Francoprovençal varieties.

4. Number, gender, and ‚partitive articles’ in Gallo-Romance

Whereas the morphosyntax and function of ‚partitive articles’ is pretty well described and understood for Standard French (see section 2), little is known about their existence, morphology and function in non-standardized Gallo-Romance varieties of the Occitan (Southern part of France) and the Francoprovençal area (small area in the South-Eastern part of France, Western part of Switzerland and Valley of Aosta in Italy):

(19)



http://guernseydonkey.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/langues_france.jpg

4.1 Occitan

Generally, traditional descriptions and atlases of Occitan (cf. Bec 1971, 1973, Nauton 1959 or Séguy 1966) do not say much about indefinite determiners or quantifiers, let alone their syntax (e.g. obligatory or optional status). In a typological approach to Romance languages,

Bossong 2008 states the following:

Der Partitiv ist überall im okzitanischen Sprachraum verbreitet, aber in unterschiedlicher Form. Die dialektale Verteilung ist aufschlussreich; es liegt eine Graduierung von der Ibero-Romania bis hin zum Französischen vor. (Bossong 2008: 140)

[The partitive is found everywhere in the Occitan region, but in different shape. The dialectal distribution is telling: there is a gradual spread from the Iberoromance area to the French dialects.]

Bossong seems to insinuate language contact as the main driving force behind the distribution of the ‘partitive article’ in Occitan, independently of internal correlations like the ones identified here in sections 2 and 3.

In order to test our predictions from section 3.5, especially the hypothesis of a strong correlation between agglutinative unambiguous plural marking and the impossibility of ‘partitive articles’ like in French, we have to have a look at the - quite varying – Occitan systems of number marking on N (cf. Sauzet 2012, 2014).

In Gascon dialects,⁵ we find number marking very similar to the Spanish pattern described under (7):

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (20) a. <i>eth</i> _{M.SG} <i>ò-m-i</i> _{M.SG} [ed ‘ɔmi]
‘the man’ | <i>eth-s</i> _{M.PL} <i>ò-m-is</i> _{M.PL} [e(d)z ‘ɔmis], also sometimes [‘ɔməs]
‘the men’ |
| b. <i>era</i> _{F.SG} <i>bots</i> _{F.SG}
‘the voice’ | <i>era-s</i> _{F.PL} <i>bots</i> _{F.PL}
‘the voices’ |
| c. <i>aubèr-a</i> _{F.SG}
‘hazelnut’ | <i>aubèr-às-s-es</i> _{F.PL} (or <i>aubèras</i>) (‘surmarquage du pluriel’)
‘hazelnuts’ |

We can see that there is general overt plural marking by ‘agglutinative’ –s attached to singular forms (plus some vowel changes in the singular stem). In some areas of Gascon, however, there seems to be no phonetic realisation of graphic –s (Hautes-Pyrénées et Val d’Aran, cf. Massourre 2012: 155-158), and most descriptions of Gascon state the absence of a ‘partitive article’ (see e.g. Bossong 2008:140, Sauzet 2014:2). Most interestingly, Séguy (1966) contains some maps (“de l’argent”, “des choux/soldats”) where a ‘partitive article’ is found in Gascon varieties in areas neighbouring directly French dialects (in the North) or Limousin dialects (see below) from the Occitan area. This can be a result of language contact, but detailed field studies about the morphological number marking system of these Gascon varieties and the validity of the atlas data have to be conducted, in order to exclude an internal motivation.

Languedocian is comparable to Gascon as to its quite regular overt plural marking by ‘agglutinative’ –s to singular forms (Thérond 2002: 76f, sometimes however, plural is only marked on the determiner, something which needs further investigation):

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (21) a. <i>ome</i> _M
‘man’ | <i>lou-s</i> _{M.PL} <i>om-es</i> _{M.PL}
‘the men’ |
| b. <i>caus-a</i> _F
‘thing’ | <i>la-s</i> _{F.PL} <i>caus-as</i> _{F.PL}
‘the things’ |
| c. <i>bras</i> _M
‘arm’ | <i>lou-s</i> _{M.PL} <i>brass-es</i> _{M.PL}
‘the arms’ |

⁵ We use the term *variety* as a cover term for every linguistic system, independently of its sociological status (standard language, vernacular etc), following the tradition of Coseriu’s variational linguistics (cf. e.g.. Coseriu 1981). *Dialect* is used to denote established regional varieties described in geolinguistic reference works such as atlases.

- d. *pei_M* *lou-s_{M,PL} peiss-es_{M,PL}*
 ‘fish’ ‘the fish’

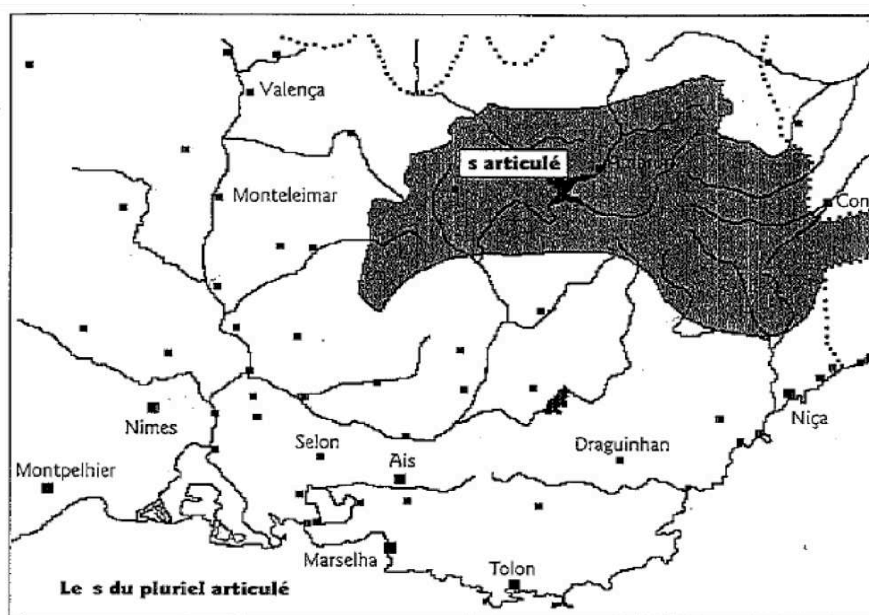
For this area, a so-called ‘partitive’ *de* with indefinite direct object DPs is reported in the literature, without however indicating its obligatory or optional status or semantics:

- (22) *Dounàs-me* *de* *pan* [...] *d’* *amellas*
 give.2SG.IMP-1SG.DAT DE bread DE almond.PL
 ‘Give me (some?) bread [...] (some?) almonds’ (Thérond 2002: 86)

This *de* is not inflected for gender and number and is maybe simply the (optional?) preposition *de*, equivalent to English *of*, indicating a pseudo-partitive construction with an empty head (‘some amount of bread, some amount of almonds’, cf. Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2009).

Provençal, the most Eastern part of the three Mediterranean areas of Occitan, is different from Gascon and Languedocian in that its nominal morphology does not realize an ‘agglutinative’ plural *-s* (only graphic in nature), except for a small area in the North-East:

(23)



(Barthélemy-Vigouroux / Guy 2000: 27)

Just like in Languedocian, we find the ‘partitive *de*’ in Provençal all over the place with indefinite direct objects, singular and plural (cf. Barthélemy-Vigouroux / Guy 2000: 83), not a real ‘partitive article’, however. This seems to confirm that the absence of agglutinative number marking does not imply necessarily the presence of a real ‘partitive article’ (see section 3.5) - there might be other means of encoding ‘non-individuation’ in the nominal morphology of the respective Romance varieties (e.g. the so-called ‘neuter’, cf. Stark 2008a, Pomino/Stark 2009).

Finally, according to Bossong (2008: 142), Northern Occitan dialects have a true partitive article (spoken in Limousin and Auvergne; the empirical evidence of this statement remains, however, obscure):

In order to understand this phenomenon, the *ALAVAL* data have to be completed by additional fieldwork and corpus studies, and the hypothesis of intense language contact with French as an explanation has to be examined carefully.

5. Conclusion and outlook

Based on comparative observations concerning Standard French, Italian and Spanish and a detailed analysis of the morphosyntax of nominals in these languages, we have developed three hypotheses. First, we have claimed that overt number marking on nominals (IndP) reduces the probability of an obligatory ‘partitive article’ (in the singular), a hypothesis which has been confirmed by the Gascon and partially Languedocian facts of Occitan. We have to admit however that for many areas, data are missing, as traditional atlases have been focusing on phonetics and lexical issues much more than on morphosyntax. Detailed data are lacking for Provençal and the Northern Occitan areas (Limousin and Auvergne), which could confirm the converse tendency to develop ‘partitive articles’ where number marking on the noun itself is not agglutinative / sigmatic, but rather syncretic, deficient or absent. For Francoprovençal, we can see a partial confirmation of our second hypothesis, according to which the absence of overt word class markers increases the probability of an (obligatory?) ‘partitive article’; here, word class markers (gender?) on determiners seem to come into play, but, surprisingly, in the opposite sense – something which has to be investigated in detail by future fieldwork. As for the strongest hypothesis, which excludes ‘partitive articles’ for varieties with ‘agglutinative’ nominal morphology, especially unambiguous number marking on the noun (word class and plural markers encoded separately, not in a ‘fusional’ way, like in Spanish), this hypothesis is confirmed by the Gascon and some Languedocian facts, but, as for the ‘Francoprovençal A’ area, language contact may lead to borrowed structures not corresponding to the morphosyntactic ‘type’ of a variety.

All in all, much more data (fieldwork based on questionnaires, but also on grammaticality judgement tasks, in order to get a grasp of the obligatory or optional nature of the elements in question) are needed to get a clearer picture of Gallo-Romance and the issue of language contact with regard to the regional distribution of the ‘partitive article’ - something to be continued at least also for Northern Italian dialects, which possess ‘partitive articles’ as well, but use them to a different extent and in different referential contexts (cf. e.g. Cardinaletti/Giusti 2014). Before and after this empirical work, we need sound theoretical analyses providing viable hypotheses to be tested, in order to understand the syntax and semantics and regional distribution of this highly marked element typical for Romance languages.

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